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INTELLECT; AND HOW TO USE IT.

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# AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

PHILOSOPHIC AND AMERICAN WHIG SOCIETIES

OF THE

COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY,

June 24th, 1862.

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BY REV. THEODORE L. CUYLER,  
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

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CLIO HALL, June 24th, 1862.

“RESOLVED, That the thanks of the Society be tendered to the Rev. THEO. L. CUYLER for his able and eloquent address, delivered to-day, and that a Committee be appointed to solicit a copy for publication.”

JOHN T. DUFFIELD,  
JOSEPH L. MUNN,  
H. W. JACKSON,  
T. A. BALDWIN,  
E. D. LEDYARD,  
Committee.

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WHIG HALL, June 24th, 1862.

“RESOLVED, That the thanks of this Society be returned to the Rev. THEO. L. CUYLER for his able and eloquent address, delivered before the two Societies this morning, and that a copy be requested for publication.”

H. C. CAMERON,  
F. B. HODGE,  
S. SAYRE,  
Committee.

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## A D D R E S S.

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TWENTY-ONE years ago, an inexperienced lad—parting from his classmates—left the gateway of yonder College green to enter upon the march and the bivouac of active life. The auroral light of youth beamed on our pathway. The future rose before us in many-colored visions of toil and of triumph—of struggle and conflict, of sorrow and joy.

That future is now the past—sobered by experience into the “light of common day.” That lad is before you—an eager visitant to the home of his literary boyhood.

Wearied by the daily friction of long pastoral toil, I said to myself, let me go home and re-visit venerable Princeton—prolific mother of four thousand cultured sons;—who has nursed on her loving bosom men, the weight of whose spears was “like unto a weaver’s beam.” I will go and see the spot where Dickinson and Davies watched and prayed beside the cradle of academic culture in a rustic hamlet—where Wither-  
spoon’s voice rang for liberty above the crashing thunder of hostile guns—where Southard and Frelinghuysen (New Jersey’s twin Castor and Pollux) began their bright career—where young Biddle mused beside the Castalian fount, and Brainerd Taylor mused beside the cross—where James Madison sinewed his strength for great constitutional combats;—above all, the spot from which America’s mightiest philosopher soared upward in his chariot of fire—his sepulchre still with you to this day!

Coming back to this sacred spot, I find myself at home. I find the memories of my boyhood still floating among yonder trees. The old college-bell rings again for me. I hear again in yonder chapel the call of that roll, which Death has been busy in



calling ever since, and to which many a brave spirit has calmly answered "here!"

For this home of my youth I feel grateful. Will it be too much for me to say, that I had rather have spent those six educational years in the class-rooms of Princeton than within any other walls in our land? Some other institutions may boast of greater antiquity or of a more munificent endowment; a larger number of volumes may be stored in the alcoves of Cambridge; a larger number of students may be gathered under the elms of Yale.

But if the true heraldry of a college is the names of its sons, then Nassau Hall need not blush to present her catalogue beside theirs. Nor need she fear to claim that for a symmetrical influence upon the whole mental character—for practical training in scientific research—for civil pursuits, or for pulpit disquisition, she is the peer of any American University.

If I may be personal and local in my allusions a moment longer, let me say that I count it an especial favor that my lot was cast here at one of the golden eras of Princeton's history. Never were the class-rooms filled with a larger array of pupils. Never were the chairs of both institutions graced with more distinguished incumbents. The polished culture of James W. Alexander then adorned the chair of Belles-Letters. Carnahan presided, with dignity, over the domain of Philosophy; Torrey's skilful hand held the retort and the blow-pipe; and an eye, too modest to meet the gaze of a fellow-man, was not afraid to out-watch Orion and the seven stars through the telescope of the astronomer. The flashing wit, and silvery voice of Albert B. Dod, (then in his splendid prime) threw a new charm over the higher Mathematics. From all parts of the land flocked devotees of science to the laboratory of Henry; while to the other end of the avenue gathered students of theology to sit at the feet of the sainted Miller, and the two incomparable Alexanders.

With the teachings of these great men, I rank the advantages of the two Literary Societies, which in those days were held to be supplements to, and not substitutes for the regular

curriculum of the college. As training-schools for the bar, the forum and the pulpit, they cannot be overrated ; none but a fool would despise them. . . Many a man has made a more splendid figure in public life from the culture and discipline received in Whig Hall. And for myself, I am grateful that in the period of life most susceptible to female beauty I paid most assiduous court to that muse with the white neck and the snowy limb, whose motto is "*Prodesse Quam Conspici.*"

Young gentlemen of the Societies, this is a literary festivity. The purpose for which you are banded together is intellectual advancement. You are here equipping yourselves for the mental and the moral encounters of life. These college classrooms and these literary halls are the Gymnasium of the mind ; and when your education is completed here, you are to go out into the world and commence your studies. The intellects here trained are to be employed on that arena before you—and on the method of their employment depends the issue of success or of failure—on this hangeth the glory of life or its inevitable shame.

INTELLECT—AND HOW TO USE IT—is the theme I have chosen for the hour. Let me offer you briefly such practical thoughts, with such illustrations from human history and biography as I have been able to throw together in the intervals of a most exacting profession.

For what has the Creator given us our brains? Why are affluent mental gifts bestowed upon some men? And how may even moderate abilities be made most effective for the promotion of truth, and the well-being of humanity? These are questions that concern young men—especially those who are placed on the highest planes of intellectual culture and influence. All men are concerned in these questions ; for a great man is, perhaps, the greatest fact in the history of an age. No more decisive influence can be brought to bear upon any age, or any community, than the employment of its highest intellect for truth or for error—for God and the right, or for the Devil's wrong. Intellect ennobled—purified—heaven-directed is the universal power to build up. Intellect pervert-



ed, corrupted, sin-directed is the most terrible of agencies to pull down and destroy. "How shall I use my intellect?" is the most vital moral problem that can come before the court of your conscience.

Some men hold that talents are given for the same purpose that wealth is often inherited—for mere personal luxury. There be intellectual millionaires who decorate their mind, as a palace, for pride to walk through. Its superb picture-galleries, whose walls a creative imagination has clothed with visions of entrancing beauty—its saloons of receptiveness, in which stately thoughts do come and go—its costly libraries, where memory stores up its massive accumulation, shelf on shelf—its statue-lined corridors and halls, are but the splendid realm which self has adorned by the "might of its own power, and for the honor of its own majesty." Scarcely a living being is the wiser, the better, the happier for such mental monopolists. They stand in the midst of humanity as the marble mansion of a selfish Duke might stand in the midst of a poverty cursed and squalid peasantry. While the nabob is gorging at his rosewood table, or lounging before his Murillos, the poor Lazarus without is begging crumbs for the lean and hungry brats, such as Murillo portrayed upon his canvass. One man surfeits; the others starve. There is enough for all, if it were distributed. Distribution is Heaven's law—whether the treasures be in the lordly mansion, or in the lordly mind. For God never gave to man fine intellectual powers—vigorous understanding—strong-winged imagination—cunning invention, or soul-rousing eloquence for the owner's sole use and benefit. Talent is trust. Let no man covet it, unless there come with it wisdom from above to ensure it a right direction.

One student uses his brain—as he uses his midnight lamp—merely to illuminate the page before his single eye. Another man makes his intellect a meridian sun! How bountifully does the full urn of noonday overflow! Not only on Alpine peaks, and "heart of the Andes," kindled into pyramids of fire, but down into modest vales the sunlight falls—warming the honey-



suckle o'er the cottage doorway—lifting the tiny wheat blade from its earthy tomb—and even when some solitary daisy is shaded beneath an overgrown tree, the generous sun wheels round and round, until before nightfall the daisy too is reached, and fills her little cup with golden light. Such full-orbed intellects there be. They turn midnight into noon. Upon the most elevated minds and the most favored classes their rays may fall the earliest; but at length the lowliest vallies of human life are warmed in the celestial influence. So rose the tent-maker of Tarsus upon a benighted age. Amid the gloom of the sixth century shone out Augustine—amid the prejudice of the fifteenth beamed Christopher Columbus. The sixteenth century came in with clouds and darkness on its awful front. God said “let there be light,” and Luther was! When his sun departed with its trail of glory, the moral heavens beamed, in turn, with Lord Bacon, Milton, Isaac Newton, Leibnitz, Pascal, Edwards, Chalmers—each an overflowing orb of truth.

Have you never observed the descriptive phrase which Inspiration employs to set forth the moral benefactors of mankind? The phrase employed is the happy one of “watering,” conveying the noble thought that it is the office of great intellect both to descend and to distribute.

In the torrid lands of the Orient, it was the wont of monarchs to construct vast reservoirs on the mountain-sides. These were filled by the rains of heaven. When the summer-heats had drank the gardens and the vineyards dry, the waters of the reservoir were conducted down, and forthwith the wilted vine lifted its head again, and the drooping fig-tree smiled. Green grew the pomegranate at the water's cool touch; and golden grew the barley-harvest. So on the heights of influence God replenishes intellectual reservoirs. He fills them from on high. He fills them to irrigate the masses below them. The truths that accumulate there will stagnate if selfishness lock up the sluice-gates. But let it be your ambition, young gentlemen, to accumulate for others; freely receiving, freely give. Let not the curse that rests on him who hedges round his well in season of drought—or on him who locks

up his granary in time of famine rest on you, for intellectual stinginess; the meanest of misers is he who hoards a truth.

The sources of intellectual power are various. The range of employment for your mental attainments will be as various also as your several pursuits in life—far too wide for the reach of a single hour's discussion. But there are two sources of mental power and usefulness, which are opened to every young man who has a brain to think or a heart to feel. Learning and Eloquence—getting the truth and giving the truth—are the two most attainable possessions for every healthy mind. For while the Creator has bestowed great analytical acumen as a gift comparatively rare—while the imagination, which can

“Glance from heaven to earth,  
From earth to heaven,”

belongs to a favored few—while fertility of invention is a monopoly of genius, yet nearly every healthy intellect can acquire truth and impart it. Young brethren, every affirmative man in your class (who is not smitten with congenital barrenness) may become measurably learned and measurably eloquent. For what is learning but storing the interior man through the five conduits of sight, touch, smell, taste and hearing, and so storing it that every precious parcel shall be at arm's reach in the instant of need? This depends on industry—not Genius. (Unless you make Genius to be the power of doing with prodigious rapidity, what other minds effect by slow and steady strain—as the driving-wheels of a locomotive achieve the same number of revolutions in a minute that the wheel of a baggage-wagon accomplishes in an hour.)

Within the last few years England and America have laid in their honored graves two men, who were prodigies of acquirement unsurpassed. One of them lies by the side of Addison in Westminster Abbey. The other—a name-sake of Addison—lies by the side of President Edwards in yonder Westminster Abbey of America. One of them, when at school, was known among his school-fellows as “Macaulay, the Omniscient.” From boyhood he was a terrible toiler. He saw every thing; he heard every thing; he read every thing;



he remembered every thing. It is even said that if every copy of Milton's *Paradise Lost* had been committed to the flames, the whole of the matchless epic could have been recovered, line for line, from the tablets of Macaulay's memory. That Macaulay had genius none will deny; but his special power was the power of acquiring, classifying and presenting vast arrays of truth, and so presenting them as at once to enrich the memory and captivate the understanding. He was one of the distributing reservoirs of History. He is the father and founder of a school of authorship, in which he as yet stands without an equal. Other men have penetrated into profounder political philosophy. Others have preserved a more rigid impartiality. But no other man has combined in himself such power of acquisition, and such power of presentation—such exhaustless wealth of knowledge “from the royal cedar to the hyssop of the wall”—such enthusiastic conception of the grand and heroic, mingled with such detestation of what is sensual, selfish and devilish in human history. In his own fine language it may be said of him that “among the eminent men whose bones lie near him in the Great Abbey, none has left a more stainless, and scarcely one a more splendid name.”

If Macaulay had no superiors in Britain, he certainly had one American rival in powers of acquisition and retention. His own attainments in the domain of letters and of civil history were not more remarkable than the attainments in sacred literature, in oriental research, and in ecclesiastic history, by Joseph Addison Alexander.

As I pronounce that hallowed name, the visions of student-days come back before me. I seem to see again that form as it once stood in that sacred desk; I seem to hear again those plaintive tones as they once melted on this air. That square, massive head, (which we fancied to be like to Napoleon's,) rises once more before us; the ruddy glow on the cheek a beautiful emblem of the soul-health within. From those lips we seem to hear again those streams of concinnate exegesis—those brilliant bursts of impassioned vehemence—those tides of holy emotion—all poured forth in a voice that sometimes



swelled through the vestibule to passers in the street, and sometimes hushed itself to the plaintive melody of a lute.

Such a reservoir has not been opened from any American pulpit in our generation. No man ever saw the bottom of that profound, capacious, all-containing, inexhaustible intellect. No man ever laid a task too heavy on that herculean memory. From a single reading he could commit a whole discourse; from a single perusal he rose up master of an intricate volume—his mental recreations were other men's arduous toils. A thousand pulpits are the richer for the accumulations of that one busy and beautiful life—that career of labor and of love. Alas for us, that such a life should have ended! Alas! for the bereaved town—the bereaved seminary and church, that never can grow reconciled to its bereavement! We go into our libraries, and behold two fatal gaps in two favorite departments of study; and we ask ourselves “who will ever finish yonder magnificent History since Macaulay's hand has forgot its cunning? Who will ever carry on those affluent commentaries since Addison Alexander has passed to the loftier knowledge and clearer light of the Heavenly world?

Lest any one should be discouraged by the presentation of such prodigies of mental acquisition as the two celebrated examples just cited, let me say that they owed their eminence and usefulness to herculean industry. Young men, choose for your patron-saint, industry. Get some starling to cry work—work—work—study—study—study. Study every thing, but with a bearing on your own line of intellectual labor. Concentrate on one point, or a few points, “as a gardener, by severe pruning, forces the sap of the tree into two or three vigorous limbs, instead of suffering it to become a sheaf of spindling twigs.” Concentration is the secret of strength. “Stick to your brewery,” said the great Rothschild to Mr. Buxton, “and you will be the first brewer of London. Try to be brewer, banker, manufacturer and merchant, and you will soon be—in the gazette.”

“Mr. A—— often laughs at me,” said Professor Henry once in yonder College Laboratory, “often laughs at me, because I

have but one idea." He talks about every thing, aims to excel in many things, but I have learned that if I ever make a breach, I must play my guns continually upon one point.

This sober wisdom met its reward. He gave his days and nights to physical science. From the time when, an obscure youth, he studied Silliman's Journal by fire-light, in a log cabin, on to the day when English dukes and earls rose up to do him respect, he had but one aim in life—to add to the sum of human knowledge. He found the earth and air full of electricity, and he found, too, that the galvanic current slow, but steady, and continuous, was worth a thousand brilliant electric flashes. He set to work upon this, with might and main. He linked battery to battery; harnessed the subtle fluid into gigantic magnets, and made it lift prodigious burdens. And when at last, by his untiring toil, a chaos of facts was marshalled into the symmetry of a science, when, in obedience to his guidance, (in common with other co-laborers) the electric current mounted the wires as a message-bearer round the globe—then did the Genius of Truth, crown Joseph Henry with the benediction, "thou hast sought me and found me, because thou didst search for me with all the heart."

II. Thus much for the acquisition of knowledge, which depends upon a busy brain. It is the result of concentration, and industry invincible.

Eloquence, on the other hand, which is the second source of intellectual power that I am commending to you—eloquence is the golden product of an inspired heart. No elaboration of rhetoric—no oratorical culture can produce it, which ignores the spontaneous emotions of an honest, fearless, loving heart.

Would you rule men from the rostrum, from the bar, or from the sacred desk? Let no devil cheat you out of your conscience; let no callous critic shame you out of your honest emotions.

For what is eloquence but truth in earnest? The mind's best words spoken in the mind's best moments.

When truth gets full possession of a man's conscience—when all his sensibilities are aroused and his sympathies in full play



—when the soul becomes luminous, until the interior light and glow blazes out through every loop and crevice—when, from head to foot, the whole man becomes the beaming, burning impersonation of truth—then is he honestly, naturally, irresistibly eloquent. To this a great head is not always essential; a great heart is, and must be.

David wailing over his self-ruined darling Absalom—Paul pleading before Felix, until the guilty man paled to the color of his marble throne—Martin Luther, stretching up to the full height of his manhood, in those words, “here I stand, I cannot otherwise; God help me; Amen”—Patrick Henry, sounding the key-note to Bunker Hill, in, “give me liberty, or give me death!”—Whitfield, depicting the perils of a lost soul on the verge of the pit, until the plumes on Duchesses’ head-dresses quivered, and Chesterfield cried out, “Good God! he is gone!”—Kossuth, sounding the requiem of his dead nationality—and Alexander Duff pronouncing his sublime farewell to the heathery hills of Scotland—these men were eloquent, not by special inspiration of the head, but by overpowering inspiration of the heart. The burning soul kindled the lips; and the baptism of eloquence came in the form of a “fiery tongue.”

The loftier the emotion, observe, the more impressive the utterance of the orator. The same law applies to eloquence that applies to hydrostatics. If the jet is to be thrown to a great height in the public fountain, the spring that feeds the fountain must have a lofty birth-place on the mountain-side. He who is false to the better instincts of his soul, seldom can be eloquent. To the limber-tongued politician laboring with cunning speech to make the worse appear the better side, to the hireling pleader who barter justice for a fee, or to the hireling priest who sells souls for salary—nature denies to such that gift which she reserves for the leal and loyal spirit.

The grandest achievement of eloquence has been reached when the orator has received the fullest celestial baptism of love—when self has become swallowed up in the glory that surrounds the cross of Calvary.



And where should we look for the highest realizations of true eloquence, but in the pulpit? Where is there less excuse for tameness, for affectation, for heartlessness, for stupidity? Where can the strongest intellect find fuller play? For the ambassador of truth has not only the loftiest of themes, but his text-book is the most perfect of models. In it may be found every thing that is most sublime in imagery—most melting in pathos—most irresistible in argument. The minister of Christ need not betake himself to the drama of Greece—the forum of Rome—or to the mystic retreats of German philosophy; he need not study Chatham in the Senate Chamber, or Erskine at the bar. He may ever be nurturing his soul amid those pages where John Milton fed, before those eyes which had “failed with long watching for liberty and law,” beheld the gorgeous visions of “Paradise.” He may be ever amid the scenes which inspired Bunyan to his matchless dream, and taught Jeremy Taylor his hearse-like melodies. The harp of Israel’s minstrel is ever in his ear—before his eye moves the magnificent panorama of the Apocalypse. He need but open his soul to that “oldest choral melody” the book of Job; if it used to inspire Charles James Fox for the Parliament-house, why not himself for the pulpit? Paul is ever at his elbow to teach him trenchant argument—John to teach persuasion, and a heart of steel must he have who is not moved to pathos in the chamber of heart-stricken David, or under the olive-trees of Gethsemane. The Bible is the best of models too, for it is always true to the life. It reaches up to the loftiest—down to the lowliest affairs of existence. The same divine pencil that portrayed the scenic splendors of the Revelations and the awful tragedy of Golgotha, condescends to etch for us a Hebrew mother bending over her cradle of rushes—a village-maiden bringing home the gleanings of the barley-field, and a penitent woman weeping on the Saviour’s feet. What God has ennobled, who shall dare to call common? What true orator of nature will fear to introduce into the pulpit a homely scene, or a homespun character—a fireside incident or a death-bed agony—the familiar episodes

of the field and the shop, the school-room and the nursery. He does not lower the dignity of the pulpit; he rather imparts to it the higher dignity of human nature.

Would that the pulpit—which is the most potent educator among us—would that every pulpit were thoroughly liberated, not only from a time-serving expediency that muffles its rebuking thunders, but from a contemptible petit-maitreism that curbs its free manly activities.

From the pulpit, the statesman should learn the “higher law” of justice and of right; the merchant should learn the golden rule of integrity. Before the pulpit the politician should breathe an atmosphere of such crystal purity that a descent into the Avernus of our ordinary “politics” would be instant suffocation. The patriot should find his minister more patriotic than himself; the maiden should be the purer for his delicacy; the mother should find a christian culture made the easier for his luminous portraiture of the child-life’s joys and sorrows. His every utterance should be a fresh inspiration to the artist—a fresh stimulus to the intellect of the scholar. No man should build so high, but the pulpit should build above him. No reckless youth in his wildest aberration of profligacy should ever reach a pitfall or a precipice that had not been mapped out to him before-hand in the pulpit. And on life’s rough highway, no sinning sufferer should faint or fall—or be flung into thicket so dense and dark, but over him should bend Christ’s messenger of love, and into his bleeding wounds should distil the balm of Heaven’s Gospel.

In all this, is there no scope for the loftiest intellect?

III. Young gentlemen, I trust that I have not wearied you by this didactic homily. Lest I may do so, let me invite you (before I close) to an episode in the history of American eloquence. It furnishes an illustration of the employment of intellect on an occasion, and for a purpose of transcendent interest. It is not new to you in the whole outline; but some of my limnings may present to you new features of the spectacle. In these sad times the scene has a striking, and almost melancholy significance.



The twenty-sixth of January, 1830, will ever be memorable in the forensic history of the Republic. It was a day to be remembered. From an early hour of that January morning the great avenue of Washington was lined by a steady procession moving up to the Capitol. To witness the expected conflict, Washington sent forth its first and its fairest; every city in the land was represented in the splendid assemblage. Before twelve o'clock, the Senate Chamber was overflowing into the Rotunda, and men were offering bribes for a few inches of breathing-room within the charmed enclosure. One enormous member, from Alabama, (the weightiest legislator that ever obstructed the view of the public from any political question) became wedged in behind the Vice President's chair. Unable to move, he became slowly imbedded in the crowd—like a broad-bottomed schooner settling at low tide into the mud. Unable to see, he drew out his knife, and after a long effort he pierced a hole through the stained glass that flanked the presiding officer's chair. The aperture, which tradition says was long visible in that window, is the memorial of Dixon H. Lewis's curiosity to witness the greatest of American debaters deliver the greatest of American orations.

The place was worthy of the hour, and the combatants. It was the old Senate chamber—the battle-arena of the giants—the same hall which had once resounded to the polished eloquence of Rufus King, and which had echoed back the murmurs of applause that greeted the farewell address of Henry Clay. On that memorable morning the chamber was thronged with nearly all the eminent men whom any one thinks of when he thinks of American oratory. From the President's chair lowered the portentous eye, and cast-iron brow of John C. Calhoun. Before him sat Van Buren and Forsyth, and Woodbury—the eloquent Hayne and the strong-minded Clayton—the omniverous Benton, who aimed to know everything, and the indefatigable Quincy Adams, who actually succeeded. In the seething crowd that day was the gaunt skeleton form of John Randolph, of Roanoke—the eccentricity who once closed a four days speech by saying, “Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to



take my seat ; for I am just approaching the threshold of my subject." The imperial figure of Clay, and the thoughtful face of Silas Wright, were alone wanting to have made it the most brilliant assemblage of civilians since the era of the Revolution.

In the midst of that breathless chamber—where the echoes of Col. Hayne's silvery eloquence were still lingering on the air—Daniel Webster arose! His friends remarked, that in deference to the great occasion, he had arrayed himself in the old Whig costume of Burke and Fox—the "buff and blue." An austere beauty clothed his swarthy countenance. Within the cavernous eyes the furnace-fires were slowly kindling. The signal-gun of the memorable speech was in those well-known words which have oft been rehearsed on the platforms of Nassau Hall. I need not recite them. Nor need I detain you to review all the points of that colossal effort, nor tell you how the constitutional cannonade rolled its three hours of unbroken thunder, until the last miserable shred of "nullification" was shot in ribbons from the wreck! Nor need I tell you how, in his Olympian wrath, the orator turned suddenly upon the Senator from New Hampshire, with the terrific sneer, "I employ no scavengers"—and the Senator ducked his bald head as if dodging an actual bombshell!

And how, when Mr. Webster pronounced the magic words, "there is Massachusetts, behold her for yourselves!—there is her history; the world knows it by heart!—there is Concord and Bunker Hill, and there they will remain forever," the sons of the old Bay State present bowed their heads, and wept right out like little children. How shall I tell you with what awe-struck silence they all listened to the deep diapason of the closing passage—the grandest that ever fell from American lips?

"Mr. President—When my eyes shall be turned to behold, for the last time, the sun in heaven, may I not see him shining on the broken and dishonored fragments of a once glorious Union; on States dissevered, discordant, belligerent; on a land rent with civil feuds, or drenched, it may be, in fra-

ternal blood! Let their last feeble and lingering glance, rather, behold the gorgeous ensign of the republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full high advanced, not a stripe erased or polluted, nor a single star obscured—bearing for its motto no such miserable interrogatory as, *What is all this worth?* but everywhere, spread all over in characters of living light, blazing on all its ample folds, as they float over the sea and over the land, and in every wind under the whole heavens, that other sentiment, dear to every true American heart—*Liberty and Union, now and forever, one and inseparable!*”

It is no wonder that the New England men that day strode the avenue with the port of conquerors—it is no wonder that the whole land opened their hearts to it as the looked-for “evangel” of constitutional law, and the most majestic utterance of the American Union’s organic vitalizing principles.

“Mr. Webster,” said a friend of ours once to the Great Expounder, “which of your own productions do you place first?” He replied, “my friend, Mr. Everett, prefers my speech on Gen’l Jackson’s Protest. The mass of my countrymen prefer my reply to Col. Hayne. But I prefer the first speech I ever made at Plymouth Rock.” Perhaps the great statesman was right. His reply to Hayne does indeed stand as the high-water mark to which forensic oratory has yet attained in the United States. But in that better time coming, when the sunlight of love has melted off the last manacle—when, to the silvery music of falling chains, America is marching up to her destiny, then it will be confessed that Daniel Webster never stood more strong and never more glorious than when he stood forth the champion of Freedom on Plymouth Rock!

I have presented to you this episode for a double reason. It furnishes a fine illustration of eloquence—of trenchant argument, made “red hot” by noble passion. It furnishes a striking example, too, of intellect employed for one of its loftiest ends—the elucidation of great political truths, and the enforcement of those principles that save a country.

And when, in all the range of human history, has a loftier



goal been set before the human mind than that which Providence now presents to America's best intellect—even no less than the salvation of the Republic, "time's noblest offspring," if not its "last?" Not only the grandest eloquence may be evoked, but the profoundest study and the broadest knowledge are in requisition.

Into the thick of this crisis Providence is bringing you, my young friends, and those of you who graduate to-day are to be ushered at once into the arena of this prodigious struggle. From studying history, some of you are now to live history, and help in making history for time to come. From these quiet retreats where you have been putting on life's armor, you are to go forth to try now the mettle of your steel.

The great problem which you and I are to do our humble part towards settling, is no less than the problem how to restore, how to rebuild, how to perpetuate the grandest federated government that ever shed its sunshine on a people.

On this great topic of the hour, permit me a few frank word here, where free speech has always been held sacred. For in these days silence is suspicion, and neutrality is treason.

The great problem of the hour is—how to restore, how to strengthen, how to perpetuate our beloved Union. For we are beginning now to see that—under its original conditions—our federal Union was never strong enough for the strain that was to come upon it. Federated governments or republics need not be weak or be short-lived. That United Republic which stout William of Orange founded amid the fens of Holland, stood more than two centuries, and then only gave place to a constitutional monarchy. The Swiss Confederation has existed ever since that night when, on the greensward of Grutli, William Tell and Arnold Melcthal swore the great oath for Helvetic liberty. No convulsions, civil or religious, have ever been able to shatter the political Union that exists between England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales. All these were small states in territory compared with us, you say; but as an offset to this fact, they were exposed to the collisions and interfer-



ences of powerful rivals close to their borders. Their Unions have existed for generations ; but ours, after increasing threats and increasing perils of dissolution, was cloven asunder by armed treason in the seventy-third year of its existence.

For from its birth, one fatal element of weakness entered into our republic. Some of the States came into the Union reluctantly. South Carolina (I do not wonder at it) hesitated to vote for the Declaration of Independence. At first she gave her vote against that memorable charter of freedom ; and only reconsidered it for an enforced unanimity. I fear that it is too true that our now fallen and dishonored sister—the wilful “Effie Deans” of the national household—once made unchaste proposals of alliance with the British Crown. South Carolina was not alone in refusing, at the outset, allegiance to our glorious Constitution. Georgia (then embracing Alabama in its limits) joined with Carolina in rejecting the Constitution, until a recognition of the slave trade for twenty years was introduced into the document.\* In the Convention, Mr. Rutledge, of South Carolina, said, “the true question at present is, whether Southern States shall, or shall not, be parties to the Union.” Mr. Pinckney re-echoed the sentiment. His colleague stood out with him until brought in by a surrender, most abhorrent to the first instincts of moral right. But this is not all. There was not only a diversity of social institutions between the States of the North and the South, but growing out of it a diversity of sentiment on the fundamental principles of free government. As early as 1776, John Adams wrote to one of our Generals—“however, my dear friend Gates, all our misfortunes arise from a single source, the resistance of the Southern colonies to Republican government.” “Popular principles,” he says, “are abhorrent to the inclinations of the barons of the South.” Even then the sage of Quincy detected the germ of the discordance ; even then he

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\* These historic facts are drawn from an address by Hon. Senator Sumner, in Nov., 1861.

discerned on the face of the sky that little cloud, "no larger than a man's hand," which has since gathered volume and blackness, until the whole land smokes under its hideous apocalypse of fire and blood. He saw then that we were attempting the experiment of Union without unity. For three-quarters of a century we have been trying, with ever varying fortunes, to preserve political Union, without civil and social and moral unity. Two widely different organisms of society have existed, and now exist, on the two sides of that geographic line once traced by the surveys of Mason and Dixon. I do not stop to-day to discuss the moral rightfulness or wrongfulness, the good or the evil of these differing systems of labor and of social life; I merely indicate the great fact, that in the North and at the South there prevail two diverse and conflicting organisms of society. And time, instead of assimilating, has only widened the chasm that yawned between them already, when John Adams and Pinckney joined hands over the Constitution. The growth of the nation has but widened the breach. Every year of development has developed the organic difference; every year has only made the "iron" harder, and the "clay" softer in the feet of the national image. The people of the northern portion of the federation have been constantly becoming more democratic in their opinions and their usages; this has been intensified by foreign immigration. The people of the South have been growing correspondingly more aristocratic in their principles of living; and this tendency has been increased by the increasing price of their great staple of production and the increased money value of the servile class that produced it. At length, when the organic conflict grew too strong for the bonds of nationality, the decaying cord snapped, and disunity became disunion!

"Secession," said a prominent man in the rebellious convention of South Carolina last year, "secession is no spasmodic effort that has come suddenly upon us. It has been gradually culminating for a long series of years." Mr. Rhett contended (in the same Convention) that secession was "not produced by



the result of the presidential election, or by the non-execution of the fugitive slave law. It is a matter which had been gathering head for thirty years!" And that paragon of political wisdom, Mr. Keitt, said—"I have been engaged in this movement ever since I entered political life!" This gigantic conspiracy, which with one arm plundered the national armories, the national navy yards, and the national treasure-houses, and with the other struck its poiniard at the nation's life in the capitol, is but the natural, the inevitable result of that organism of society, of which the conspiracy was born. Thirty years ago, in this very town, the most eminent of the living graduates of this college (the Hon. Mr. Senator Southard) foretold the very result that has just come about; although to his prophetic eye there was not revealed the terrible apocalypse of the seven vials of bloody woe that treason has poured out on our desolated land. It is useless, my countrymen, to disguise the fact any longer. The experiment of attempting cordial unity, and permanent national existence, under two broadly diverse systems of labor—of social life, and of political ethics, has failed. It is not democratic government that has failed, (as the old world absolutists would flatter themselves). It is not the Constitution of '89 that has failed; it is not republican freedom that has failed; but a false and fatal attempt to combine two hostile and repellant systems in one vast commonwealth has failed, and just in time, too, to save the nation. For this war is not the destruction of the republic, but of the monstrous growths of wrong and political falsehood that for half a century have *imperilled* the republic's existence. For one, I do not, I can not despair of the Republic! Though no small tempest lieth npon us, yet the hour that shall lay bare to the light of heaven that corner-stone of our national structure—laid in Puritan heroism and prayers—that awful hour has not come, and never will come. Whatever be the present aspect of the conflict, be assured that God will destroy nothing that He deems worth preserving; He will save nothing which His justice dooms to destruction. If this tremendous convul-

sion shall finally result in making us a homogeneous nation—one in social systems—one in political ethics—one in loyalty to the Constitution and the Union, then shall we look back with gratitude to see how the wrath of treason was made to praise true liberty—how the nation's hard "necessity was turned to glorious gain." In thus settling anew the status of our independence upon a firmer basis, offences will come. Fiery conflicts will rage. Exasperations will continue during the whole generation that has waged this civil war. Revenges, deep and deadly, will mutter through clenched teeth their maledictions, or lie in ambush to strike the coward blow of retaliation.

But time and Providence, and the beneficence of right, will heal this stupendous hurt. The day will come when the only vestige of these furious fires will be in the purification they effected of the nation's dross—when the only memorial of all these bitter tears will be the crystalline whiteness of that escutcheon which their tears have washed; the day will come, —bright with a seven-fold brightness,—when through this very air, now darkened by driving tempest, will rise the resplendent fabric of a Union restored and re-beautified—its whole frieze sculptured over with the story of its achievements—its every pillar hung with glittering shields of victory.

In this beneficent work of love and loyalty you are to bear your part. For in the words of our gifted Secretary of State, addressed to the late Presbyterian General Assembly's Committee—"The men of our generation, whose memory will be the longest and the most honored, will be they who thought the most earnestly, prayed the most fervently, hoped the most confidently, fought the most heroically, and suffered the most patiently, in the sacred cause of Freedom and Humanity." Can a nobler use be made of the noblest intellect than to consume its powers in the salvation of such a country? to the attempted destruction of which so many men of genius have prostituted their resources of cunning and of skill! Alas! alas! for us that from these very walls some of these patricides



should have gone forth! that some of the companions of our youth, who once sat beside us in yonder class-rooms should now be sitting amid the dark and disappointed cabals of treason! Alas! for our beloved Alma Mater, that as she gazes on the gaping wounds of our bleeding country, she

Should be "made to feel  
Her culture nursed the pinions that impelled the steel!"

But that is her misfortune—not her fault. Those misguided men never learned lessons of treason on this sacred soil. They belong, too, to a past never to be renewed. Heaven grant that Nassau Hall has given her last diploma into a hand that shall strike a dastard blow at the nation's liberties!

Be it your part, my young friends, to profit by their example and avoid their errors. Be it yours to vindicate the renown of your college—to consecrate yourselves to your God and your country. Set out with the solemn resolution never to violate your conscience, and never to compromise the right. Set your faces in the direction in which human events are marching, and the finger of God is pointing. Dare to be right! Dare to be in the minority; for truth is often found in the minorities. "The great surge of numbers," as one has said, "rolls up noisily, but flats out on the shore, and slides back into the mud of oblivion. But a true opinion is the ocean itself—calm in its rest, eternal in its power! The storms and thunders of popular rage and wrong will sometimes pause in their travel round the sphere, and listen to its powerful voice. And if the night comes down to veil it for a time, it is still there, beating on with the same victorious pulse, and waiting for the day."

To-day a Queen of Beauty—more beautiful than ever graced an ancient tournament—entrusts to you her sacred banner of the Right! Unfurl it to the light—never to be furled again. Through whatever of storm and tempest that rage round your head, keep that snowy banner flying—and when at last you fall, let its celestial folds wind round you as your winding-sheet!

And like that heroic Count D'Auvergne, who fell in the thickest of the fight, your names shall never perish. For at the early morn, when the reveille was sounded, and the roll was called, some comrade (at the name of Count D'Auvergne) responded—"Died on the field of honor."

So in coming time—when the long roll of Princeton's heroic sons shall be called off—may your descendants not blush to stand up and respond for you—"Died on the field of honor—for GOD and LIBERTY!"